

I look forward to my colleagues joining me today to stand with Israel and against terrorism.

Madam President, as if in legislative session, I ask unanimous consent that the Foreign Relations Committee be discharged from further consideration of S. 1899 and the Senate proceed to its immediate consideration. I further ask that the bill be considered read a third time and passed and that the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Mr. MENENDEZ. Madam President.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from New Jersey.

Mr. MENENDEZ. Madam President, reserving the right to object, I have real concerns my colleagues' efforts to subvert the legislative process and push through a bill without due consideration from the Senate Foreign Relations Committee. I know my distinguished colleague from Florida is very interested in these issues. I hope he would ask his leadership to put him on the committee because he consistently comes to the floor and wants to circumvent the committee. This is not the first time.

Let me be very clear: Hamas is a terrorist organization, and the terrorists who lead Hamas have no regard for human life, whether they be the life of innocent Israelis targeted by their rocket attacks or the Palestinian families they constantly put in harm's way.

Israel has every right and responsibility to defend herself from attacks against their civilians, and the United States does not, and will not, ever provide funding to Hamas. Neither of those statements are up for debate. In fact, I would argue that every single Member of this body agrees with those assertions.

Indeed, the Senate has a long history of carefully crafting foreign aid programs with robust oversight, as well as sanctions that target Hamas and its supporters. With that in mind, there is simply no reason this bill can't go through regular order and sustain a markup in the Foreign Relations Committee. I looked at the dates of introduction and then its subsequent referrals—less than 3 weeks. We have done it before, and we can do it again.

As the chair of the Foreign Relations Committee, I have shown that I prioritize moving serious, bipartisan legislation. This bill in question is not a serious attempt at legislating; it is a partisan talking point.

Had the Senator from Florida, who is the chair of the Republican Senatorial Campaign Committee, or any of the bill's sponsors had a genuine interest in asserting Congress's role in foreign policy and the hard work that goes into legislating, they would have gone through the regular order of the committee process. They did not.

Instead, I imagine they would rather relish in a tweet proclaiming that Democrats support taxpayer funding of

Hamas or oppose defending Israel. And all I can say to this is, enough abusing the United States-Israel relationship for partisan political purposes. It does damage to the United States. It does damage to the State of Israel.

I am proud of my legislative efforts to defend Israel for over three decades, and I would argue that the facts that these efforts have been bipartisan speak to the strength of the United States-Israel relationship. Both Republicans and Democrats share a long track record of working together to defend Israel's right to exist and legislating accountability for U.S. taxpayer dollars spent overseas. But we have to do the work, and I do believe there are Senators who are genuinely interested in working toward that goal.

The truth is, we already have a number of laws and regulations in place regarding the delivery of lifesaving humanitarian relief. As written, this bill, by way of example why we have bills go through the committee so they can be worked on, seems intended to ensure that nobody in Gaza could ever receive any of this support. The language is written so broadly that, for example, before delivering clean water or water infrastructure, the President would effectively have to certify that anyone related to Hamas would never drink that water or drink from a water fountain that carried that water. That is simply absurd.

I would welcome a robust discussion on the ways we can continue to ensure that taxpayer dollars intended for lifesaving humanitarian relief in Gaza and elsewhere can get to those who need it the most and certainly evade and avoid the hands of Hamas.

Let's remember why we invest in foreign aid programs in the first place. We do so in pursuit of our common humanity, of our values, and our own security interests. So let's recognize the political games being played on the floor today for what they are and reject them.

Because of all of those reasons, Madam President, I object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

Mr. SCOTT of Florida. Madam President.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Florida.

Mr. SCOTT of Florida. Madam President, I am glad my colleague has acknowledged his interest in helping Israel. Unfortunately, I am surprised that the—if my colleague had an interest, why didn't the Foreign Relations Committee take up the same resolution that the majority leader retook up in support of Israel basically saying that Israel had the right to defend itself and saying that Hamas was a terrorist organization? My colleague didn't.

This is a pretty simple bill. It basically just says, look, any foreign aid we are going to give to the Palestinian Authority, we are going to make sure it doesn't go to Hamas. It is pretty simple.

Let's remember why we are doing this. President Biden's State Department said:

We're going to be working in partnership with the United Nations and the Palestinian Authority to kind of channel aid there in a manner that does its best to go to the people of Gaza.

That should scare us.

It went on to say:

As we have seen in life, as we all know in life, there are no guarantees, but we're going to do everything that we can to ensure that this assistance reaches the people who need it the most.

That is not much of a guarantee. That is a "maybe we will try." We can do better. The Senate should do better. Republicans and Democrats should all say that not a dime will ever go to Hamas, a terrorist organization that kills little boys like Ido. We should all be disgusted with this.

So I am very disappointed that my colleague uses a procedural matter to say he objects, but basically what he is saying is he will not agree that this money will not go to Hamas. This was really simple. You could read this in just 2 minutes.

I am disappointed that my Democratic colleague has made this political. It is not political. It is about, do we support Israel? Are we going to make sure that never a dime goes to Hamas and another little boy like Ido dies?

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Wyoming.

NOMINATION OF TOMMY P. BEAUDREAU

Mr. BARRASSO. Madam President, the Senate will be voting tomorrow on the nomination of Tommy Beaudreau to serve as the Deputy Secretary of the Interior. If confirmed, he will play a critical role in managing our Nation's public lands, our natural resources, our national parks, our wildlife areas, and the Outer Continental Shelf. He will oversee the management of the largest water supply in the West, and he will also oversee our Nation's trust responsibilities to American Indian Tribes and Alaska Natives. He will be responsible for the multiple uses of our public lands.

One of the most important roles that he will fulfill is overseeing the development of traditional and renewable energy supplies on public lands and waters.

Energy production on public lands is the engine of Wyoming's economy. It creates good-paying jobs. It provides tremendous revenue for the State, and we use the essential services of the State funded by this, like public education.

Mr. Beaudreau has extensive experience at the Department of the Interior. He served in a leadership position during the Obama administration. As an attorney in the private sector, he regularly handled matters relating to the Department. He is an expert in his field. His qualifications are clear. It is also clear from his nomination hearing

that he understands America's needs for an "all of the above" energy strategy. That strategy must include coal, oil, natural gas, nuclear power, and renewables.

I appreciated his commitment to working with members of the Energy and Natural Resources Committee. The Department needs to listen and collaborate with the people of Wyoming and the West. These are the States that rely heavily on energy production on our public lands. We are the States that power America. We are the ones that will be hit the hardest by President Biden's punishing Executive orders. This administration has unleashed a barrage of Executive actions that threaten to destroy the livelihoods of oil, natural gas, and coal workers in the West. It is critical that Mr. Beaudreau keep those Americans at the forefront of his mind as he works at the Department. He can serve as a voice of reason in an administration that is waging a war on American energy workers.

My goal is to hold Mr. Beaudreau and the Biden administration accountable to the commitments that Mr. Beaudreau has made to our committee, and I will support his nomination.

POLICE DEPARTMENTS

Madam President, on another topic, I come to the floor today in support of America's police officers. Every weekend, I go home to Wyoming. Every weekend, people ask me about three issues: the President's attacks on American energy, the crisis at our southern border, and the Democrats' defunding the police.

People see the headlines. They see the images on the news. They have heard about looting and rioting, the violence in Democrat-run cities. They are deeply concerned.

Last year, 63 of America's 66 largest cities saw increases in one or more categories of violent crimes. On average, homicides are up by one-third in just 1 year. Since President Biden took office, these increases have continued in Democrat-run cities. In the first 3 months of this year, homicides went up in Washington, DC; Oakland, CA; Philadelphia; Chicago; and Baltimore, just to name a few. It is no wonder that the American people tell pollsters that they feel less safe today than they did 1 year ago.

The Democratic crime surge is especially shocking because it is a reversal of a long-term trend. For a quarter of a century, crime in America had been going down. The violent crime rate was cut in half. The murder rate was also cut in half. It was a historic, bipartisan accomplishment.

Then, in 2014, Democrats began their war on law enforcement officers. After Michael Brown was killed in Ferguson, MO, Democrats started attacking police. Crime suddenly went up in Democratic cities. In the final 2 years of the Obama-Biden administration, the murder rate went up by one-fifth. Violent crime overall went up by nearly 7 percent.

Then Republicans took back the White House and the Congress. We stopped the war on law enforcement, and crime went down again.

Last year, Democrats began a repeat of 2014. This time, it was on a much larger scale. Democrats began attacking police again. Crime went up again in Democrat-run cities. America's cities saw the largest increase in murder on record.

My Democratic colleagues might say it is a coincidence. Yet there is a very clear chain of events: Democrats attack police. They cut police funding. The number of police officers went down. Crime went up.

We had a chance to fix the problem in law enforcement. Senator TIM SCOTT introduced a police reform bill, which I strongly support. Yet the Democrats blocked it. Time and again, Democrats put criminals ahead of police and law-abiding citizens. Innocent people continue to pay the price.

Democrats spend trillions and trillions of our tax dollars. Yet they cut funding to police, to law enforcement. Last year alone, Democrats cut more than \$1 billion worth of police funding. This includes cutting funding in cities where violent crime went up.

Police have been retiring or quitting in historic numbers. Fewer police officers means more crime, more destruction, and more fear in our cities.

The American people deserve better. The American people deserve safety and peace of mind. It is time for the Democrats to stop attacking the police. It is time for the Democrats to stop wasting taxpayer dollars on liberal spending. It is time for Democrats to start paying attention to public safety.

I say to my Democratic colleagues, the vast majority of police officers in this country are heroes. They put their lives on the line for us every day. It is time to treat them with respect.

When Democrats wage their war on the men and women who dedicate their lives to law enforcement, only criminals win. The rest of our Nation loses. I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from New York.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT REQUEST—S. 1520

Mrs. GILLIBRAND. Madam President, I rise to once again call for this entire body to have the opportunity to consider and cast their votes on the Military Justice Improvement and Increasing Prevention Act. This commonsense reform would ensure that people in the military who have been subjected to sexual assault and other serious crimes get the justice they deserve.

I have been calling for a full vote on the floor on this bill since May 24. That was 23 days ago. Since then, an estimated 1,288 servicemembers will have been raped or sexually assaulted. Two in three of the survivors will not even report it because they know they are more likely to face retaliation than to receive justice.

Today I want to share the story of the kind of offender our bill would address.

On March 30 of this year, SSG Randall Hughes pled guilty to a series of rapes dating back to 2006 that he committed while the Army looked the other way. Staff Sergeant Hughes was only brought to justice after his brave daughter decided to come forward. Had the Army prosecuted him the first time one of his victims had come forward, his daughter may have been spared.

At a Super Bowl party in 2017, Staff Sergeant Hughes fed drinks to his host, a soldier under his care, until the host passed out. He then approached his host's wife while she was outside the house. He propositioned her for sex, and when she refused, he forced himself on her against their grill outside their house and then dragged her inside their house, where he raped her—all while the husband was passed out in the next room.

The survivor hid in her bathroom until she could report the ordeal to CID the next day. CID took a year to investigate a relatively straightforward rape allegation. The command did nothing to expedite the investigation or hold CID's feet to the fire.

CID determined that the allegations were credible, but the command did nothing. Instead of prosecuting him, the command put Staff Sergeant Hughes on the sergeant first class promotion list.

Hopeless, the survivor asked that something, anything, be done. The command reacted by putting an administrative remark in his record.

Staff Sergeant Hughes was transferred to a new duty station, Fort Dix. While at Fort Dix, after years of sexual abuse, his daughter bravely came forward to report that abuse. CID at Fort Dix then noticed the administrative remark in his record from the previous rape and began making inquiries. They learned he had raped two other women and physically abused his wife.

The command had every tool available to stop Staff Sergeant Hughes from his serial rapes, including the abuse of his own daughter, but instead they turned a blind eye and did nothing. Even after he admitted to his crime and pled guilty, the Army offered a plea deal of 13 years of confinement—13 years of confinement despite sexually assaulting three women, including a minor. This serial offender avoided justice for 15 years. Even when the command was forced to administer justice, he received a sentence less than we would give a drug offender.

This case is why we need a professional military justice system worthy of the sacrifices the men and women in our military make every day. Having leadership at the top that truly cares and that is truly passionate about prosecuting sexual abuse will have repercussions down the chain. Our bill does exactly this.

We have 66 Senators who have co-sponsored this bill. It deserves a vote on the floor.